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NOTE BY THE SECRETARIES

to the

JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

on

BERLIN CONTINGENCY PLANNING (U)

The enclosed memorandum by the Deputy Under Secretary,  
Department of State, dated 30 March 1959, is circulated for  
information.

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JLD 901026 8/6/91  
Authority  
By HR-M/SG, KMA, Dm.

H. L. HILLYARD,

J. O. COBB,

Joint Secretariat.

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E N C L O S U R E

30 March 1959

General Nathan F. Twining USAF,  
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff,  
Department of Defense.

Dear Nate:

*Jackie Clark*

In reading JCS telegram\* 956632 of March 20, 1959, I have noted a few passages in which the abbreviation of certain statements regarding our Berlin contingency planning might lead, in the mind of the reader, to a misinterpretation of our position. I am calling these points to your attention in order that you may, if you believe it necessary, describe our position somewhat more precisely in a further communication.

Paragraph 1.B.(1) states that "GDR as substitutes for the Soviets at checkpoints in East Germany is not acceptable." It is, of course, correct that we will not accept the substitution of the GDR for the U.S.S.R. in respect of the latter's obligations regarding our access to Berlin. However, we would be prepared to allow GDR personnel at the road and rail checkpoints to perform those functions with respect to our access which have heretofore been performed by the Soviets, provided the U.S.S.R. declares the GDR personnel to be its agents for this purpose. We believe it unlikely that such an arrangement would be acceptable to the U.S.S.R., but the possibility should not be excluded.

Paragraph 1.B.(2) states that "If Soviets turn over Berlin access control to the GDR, despite Allied objection or in the absence of Allied agreement, the procedures governing movement of allied air, ground, and rail traffic should be the

same as those in effect prior to turnover with no initial abnormal show of force." This statement is rather misleading as regards road and rail access. It is not our position that we should go through the same procedures with GDR personnel as we have with Soviet personnel at the rail and road checkpoints. The precise procedures which we would follow under circumstances in which GDR personnel attempted to perform functions with relation to our access and were not acting as Soviet agents have not yet been spelled out. Our general position, as described in the agreed U.K.-U.S. minute of March 22, is that we will be "guided by the principle that the commanders (of trains, convoys, etc.) should not submit to any formalities or measures of control at the hands of GDR personnel going beyond what is necessary to enable them to identify the convoys, vehicles, or trains as belonging to the allied forces, or going beyond what may be tripartitely agreed to be reasonable to enable the GDR personnel to ensure orderly progress of traffic on the Autobahn or railroad." Recommendations regarding appropriate identification procedures are now being worked out by the Three Embassies at Bonn, in consultation with the interested military headquarters.

Paragraph 2 states that "K-Day is defined as the day the Soviets turn over control to the GDR." K-Day is properly defined as the day when our access is interrupted. It should be recognized that "turn over control to the GDR" is a highly ambiguous term and that "turn over of control" would not necessarily bring an interruption of our access to Berlin. It is quite conceivable that a "turnover" could take place but that the GDR personnel, at least initially, would be content to allow Allied traffic to pass on the basis of the identification procedures which the Three Powers had decided among

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themselves to be acceptable. Our position, as formulated in the U.S.-U.K. minute of March 22 is that "if and when the Soviet Government actually turns over the checkpoint to the GDR, every effort will be made to continue normal traffic by Autobahn and railroad, except that the procedures (as described in the foregoing paragraph) will be substituted for the present procedures followed with Soviet control personnel." One of the difficult elements of our planning is, of course, that we cannot know in advance just when K-Day will occur or precisely how the circumstances creating a K-Day will develop.

With all good wishes.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Robert Murphy  
Deputy Under Secretary